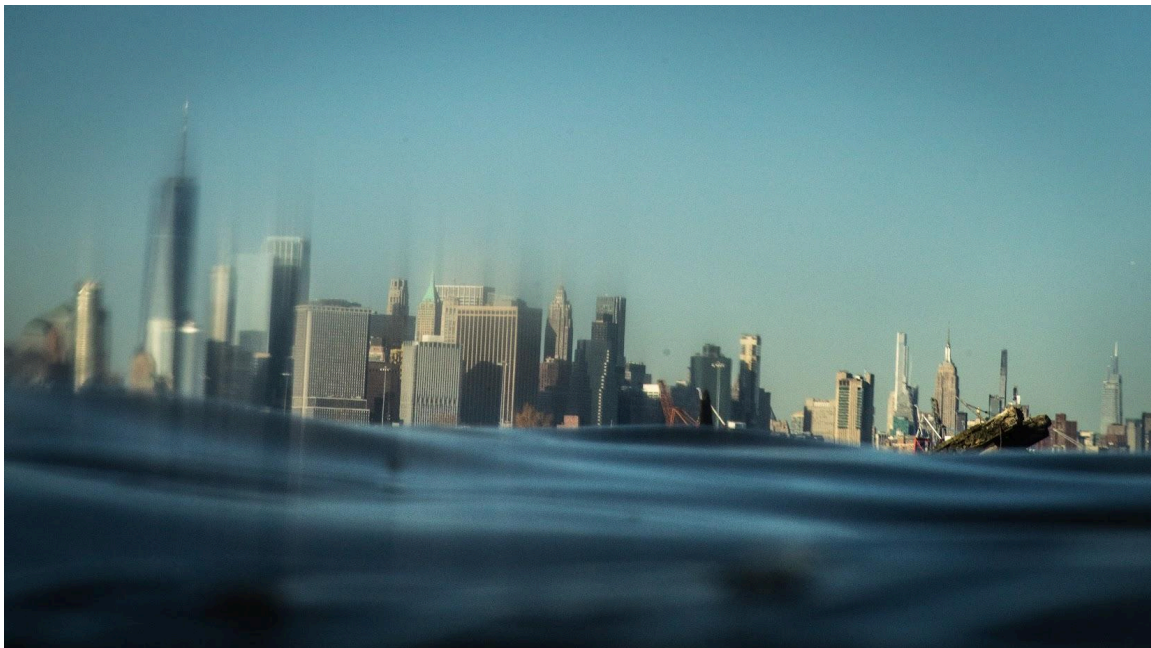




‘POV’ Presents *Emergent City*: A Decade-Long Journey Of American Democracy Growing In A Single Brooklyn Community

**Premieres Monday, August 18, 2025 at 10pm on PBS Television;
Streaming Available on [PBS App](#) Until November 16, 2025**

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*American Documentary/POV is co-presenting a special screening of **Emergent City**, followed by a Q&A at the [Roxie Theater](#) on July 29th in San Francisco*

Brooklyn, N.Y. – July 22, 2025 – POV, the multi-Emmy® and Peabody Award-winning documentary series, presents [Emergent City](#), a story about the rise of civic engagements in American democracy with the residents of a single Brooklyn community facing affordable housing pressures and the onslaught of new development proposals; factors that risk transforming their neighborhood for good. The documentary follows the residents of Sunset Park throughout a decade-long fight for the future of the district—and of New York City itself.

[Emergent City](#) is directed by POV alum Kelly Anderson and Jay Arthur Sterrenberg, executive produced by POV alum Stephen Maing (POV Season 38 opener, [UNION](#)), and produced by Anderson and Brenda Ávila-Hanna. American Documentary/POV is co-presenting a special screening of the film, followed by a Q&A at the [Roxie Theater](#) on **Tuesday, July 29, 2025**, in San

Francisco. [**Emergent City**](#) will make its national broadcast premiere on **Monday, August 18, 2025 at 10pm** (check local listings) on PBS Television. It will then be available to stream until **November 16, 2025** at [pbs.org](https://www.pbs.org), and the [PBS App](#). Now in its 38th season, *POV* remains America's longest-running nonfiction series.

[**Emergent City**](#) features residents of Sunset Park facing a tangled web of rising rents, a legacy of environmental racism, and the loss of the industrial jobs that once sustained their community. When a global developer purchases Industry City — a massive industrial complex on the waterfront — and begins to transform it into an “innovation district,” a battle erupts over the future of the neighborhood and of New York City itself.

[**Emergent City**](#) is a meticulously crafted civic epic that gives viewers a front-row seat to the public and private spaces where the city is shaped. With extraordinary access, the film tracks an ensemble of participants, including the local council members, Industry City's developers, and community members with divergent stakes. The film explores the profound intersections of gentrification, climate crisis, and real estate development and asks how change might emerge from dialogue and collective action in a world where too many outcomes are constrained by money, politics, and business as usual.



“This is a harrowing and uncertain moment in American history. As a country, we are facing so much division and so many crises that seem insurmountable,” said producer and director Kelly Anderson. “**Emergent City** shows a community with a lot of different perspectives coming together to do the hard work of talking through differences, developing a collective vision, and fighting to make it happen.”

“The future is unwritten, but we know it will be built on the stories of what has come before. Spending time with the deeply dedicated community of Sunset Park, as it engaged for a decade to have an impact on shaping their waterfront, was inspiring. Collaborating with *POV*, which has so much experience bringing critical American stories to public television, feels like a perfect

partnership as we honor what happened here and promote democratic engagement nationwide,” said Jay Arthur Sterrenberg, ***Emergent City*** director and editor.

“***Emergent City*** reminds us that New York’s greatest strength lies in its people,” said Erika Dilday, Executive Director, American Documentary and Executive Producer of *POV*. “Through the lens of Kelly Anderson and Jay Arthur Sterrenberg, we see democracy in motion—neighbors joining together to reimagine their communities and work toward a more just future. Their film is a powerful examination for organizers and anyone confronting displacement across the country, illuminating not only what’s at stake but also how we can build fairer, more equitable cities. We’re proud to showcase a neighborhood’s fight for change that resonates far beyond New York.”

Emergent City made its world premiere at the Tribeca Film Festival (2024). It was also featured at DC/DOX (2024), Big Sky Documentary Film Festival (2024), Dialogues Documentary Festival (2024), Heartland Documentary Festival (2024), St. Louis International Film Festival (2024), Architect and Design Film Festival (2024), and Climate Film Festival (2024).

Emergent City is an ITVS co-production, with funding provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, in association with Meerkat Media and Realistic Pictures. Kelly Anderson and Jay Arthur Sterrenberg are the directors. The producers are Kelly Anderson and Brenda Ávila-Hanna. The cinematographers are Sean Hanley, Alex Ramirez Mallis, Jay Arthur Sterrenberg and Viola Wan. The editor is Jay Arthur Sterrenberg. Original music by Gisela Fullà Silvestre, who is also supervising sound designer and re-recording mixer. The colorist is Natacha Ikoli. The supervising producer is Michael Kinomoto. The executive producers are Steve Maing and Carrie Lozano; and Erika Dilday and Chris White for American Documentary.

Raves include:

“The best New York City-based documentary in a decade.”

— Max Rivlin-Nadler, *Hell Gate*

“a vividly thrilling story about democracy”

— Kathy Ou, *Hyperallergic*

*“***Emergent City*** is not a polemic, nor does it fall into the “all sides” trap of equivocation. It’s curious and patient, taking the time to understand its subject. It leaves enough wiggle room for the audience to make up its own mind, a kind of nonfiction Rorschach test to help us illuminate how we really think about everything from housing costs to climate change.”*

— Alan Zilberman, *Washington City Paper*

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Download [Emergent City](#) photos.

Click [Emergent City](#) Press Kit to access the festival press notes.

Credits

Directors: Kelly Anderson, Jay Arthur Sterrenberg
Producers: Kelly Anderson, Brenda Ávila-Hanna
Cast/Participants: Andrew Kimball, Antoinette Martinez, Carlos Menchaca, Marcela Mitaynes, Elizabeth Yeampierre
Executive Producers: Steve Maing, Carrie Lozano, and Erika Dilday and Chris White for American Documentary
Cinematographers: Sean Hanley, Alex Ramirez Mallis, Jay Arthur Sterrenberg, Viola Wan
Editor: Jay Arthur Sterrenberg
Sound Design and Re-Recording Mixer: Gisela Fullà Silvestre
Original Music: Gisela Fullà Silvestre
Supervising Producer: Michael Kinomoto
Colorist: Natacha Ikoli
Language: Chinese, English, Spanish
Country: USA
Year: 2024

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About the Filmmakers

Kelly Anderson, Director, Producer, ***Emergent City***



Kelly Anderson is a Sunset Park-based documentary filmmaker whose most recent film is *Rabble Rousers: Frances Goldin and the Fight for Cooper Square* (w. Ryan Joseph and Kathryn Barnier). Her 2012 film *My Brooklyn*, about the hidden forces driving gentrification, was broadcast on WORLD and American Documentary's America ReFramed series. Kelly produced and directed *Every Mother's Son* (PBS, 2004, w. Tami Gold), about mothers whose children were killed by police, which won the Tribeca Audience Award and aired on POV. She produced and directed *Out At Work* (HBO, 2000, w. Tami Gold), which premiered at Sundance. Kelly chairs the Department of Film and Media Studies at Hunter College (CUNY).

Jay Arthur Sterrenberg, Director, Editor, ***Emergent City***



Jay Arthur Sterrenberg is a director, editor and co-founder of the Sunset Park-based Meerkat Media Collective. Documentary editing credits include Academy Awards® short-listed *Dark Money* (POV, 2018), Emmy® winning *Trophy* (CNN Films, 2018), Tribeca award-winning *Untouchable* (2016) and the 2020 Netflix doc series *Immigration Nation*, which won a Peabody Award and Best New Documentary Series at the Independent Spirit Awards. His short documentary *Public Money* (POV, 2018) is an observed portrait of an experiment in participatory democracy in Sunset Park.

Brenda Ávila-Hanna, Producer, *Emergent City*



Brenda Ávila-Hanna is a Mexican filmmaker based in California. She is a 2024 Sundance Producers Lab Fellow, a recent Rockwood/Just Films fellow and part of the inaugural cohort of DOC NYC's "Documentary Industry New Leaders." Brenda's work has been funded by ITVS, the Redford Center, the Ford Foundation, BAVC and the Central Coast Creative Corps. Brenda is an active member of BGDM, Color Congress, and the Video Consortium Mexico. She is a professor at UCSC and a board member of the Watsonville Film Festival.

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About POV

Produced by American Documentary, POV is the longest-running independent documentary showcase on American television. Since 1988, POV has presented films on PBS that capture the full spectrum of the human experience, with a long commitment to centering women and people of color in front of, and behind, the camera. The series is known for introducing generations of viewers to groundbreaking works like *Tongues Untied* (1989), *Hearts of Darkness: A Filmmaker's Apocalypse* (1992), *Rabbit in the Room* (1999), *Of Civil Wrongs & Rights: The Fred Korematsu Story* (2001), *Made in L.A.* (2007), *American Promise* (2013), *Not Going Quietly* (2021), *While We Watched* (2022), *A House Made of Splinters* (2022), *The Last Out* (2023) and the mini-series *And She Could be Next* (2020). Throughout its history POV has featured the work of award-winning, innovative filmmakers including Jonathan Demme, Laura Poitras, Nanfu Wang, Frederick Wiseman, Emiko Omori, Janus Metz Pedersen and Ava DuVernay. In 2018, POV Shorts launched as one of the first PBS series dedicated to bold and timely short-form documentaries. In 2024, *Indiewire* named seven POV films in its roundup of "The 50 Best Documentaries of the 21st Century": *Faya Dayi* (2021), *The Mole Agent* (2020), *Minding The Gap* (2018), *Cameraperson* (2016), *The Look of Silence* (2015), *The Act of Killing* (2013) and *After Tiller* (2013). All POV programs are available for streaming concurrent with broadcast on all station-branded PBS platforms, including [PBS.org](https://www.pbs.org) and the [PBS App](https://www.pbs.org/app), available on iOS, Android, Roku streaming devices, Apple TV, Android TV, Amazon Fire TV, Samsung Smart TV, Chromecast and VIZIO. For more information about PBS Passport, visit the [PBS Passport FAQ](#) website.

POV goes "beyond the broadcast" to bring powerful nonfiction storytelling to viewers wherever they are. Free educational resources accompany every film and a community network of thousands of partners nationwide work with POV to spark dialogue around today's most pressing issues. POV continues to explore the future of documentary through innovative productions with partners such as *The New York Times* and The National Film Board of Canada and on platforms including Instagram.

POV films and projects have won 48 Emmy Awards, 28 George Foster Peabody Awards, 16 Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Awards, three Academy Awards® and the first-ever George Polk Documentary Film Award. Learn more at pbs.org/pov and follow @povdocs on social media.

About American Documentary, Inc.

American Documentary, Inc. (AmDoc) is a multimedia organization dedicated to creating, identifying and presenting contemporary stories that express opinions and perspectives rarely featured in mainstream media outlets. AmDoc is a catalyst for public culture, developing collaborative strategic engagement activities around socially relevant content on television, online and in community settings. These activities are designed to trigger action, from dialogue and feedback to educational opportunities and community participation.

Major funding for POV is provided by PBS, the Open Society Foundations, The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Wyncote Foundation, Reva & David Logan Foundation, Park Foundation, and Perspective Fund. Additional funding comes from the National Endowment for the Arts, New York State Council on the Arts, public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, Chris and Nancy Plaut, Acton Family Giving, and public television viewers. POV is presented by a consortium of public television stations, including KQED San Francisco, WGBH Boston and THIRTEEN in association with WNET.ORG.

About PBS

[PBS](https://pbs.org), with more than 330 member stations, offers all Americans the opportunity to explore new ideas and new worlds through television and digital content. Each month, PBS reaches over 36 million adults on linear primetime television, more than 16 million users on PBS-owned streaming platforms, 53 million viewers on YouTube, and 60 million people view PBS content on social media, inviting them to experience the worlds of science, history, nature, and public affairs and to take front-row seats to world-class drama and performances. PBS's broad array of programs has been consistently honored by the industry's most coveted award competitions. Teachers of children from pre-K through 12th grade turn to [PBS LearningMedia](https://pbs.org/learningmedia) for digital content and services that help bring classroom lessons to life. As the number one educational media brand, [PBS KIDS](https://pbs.org/kids) helps children 2-8 build critical skills, enabling them to find success in school and life. Delivered through member stations, PBS KIDS offers high-quality content on TV — including a PBS KIDS channel — and streaming free on pbskids.org and the [PBS KIDS Video app](https://pbs.org/kids/video-app), games on the [PBS KIDS Games app](https://pbs.org/kids/games-app), and in communities across America. More information about PBS is available at [PBS.org](https://pbs.org), one of the leading dot-org websites on the internet, [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/pbs), [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/pbs), or through our [apps for mobile and connected devices](https://pbs.org/apps-for-mobile-and-connected-devices). Specific program information and updates for press are available at pbs.org/pressroom or by following [PBS Communications on X](https://pbs.org/communications-on-x).

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